

KEHOE'S CORNER

News from the office of Senator Christine Kehoe



Capitol Office

State Capitol
Room 3086
Sacramento CA 95814
916/651-4039

San Diego Office

2445 5th Avenue,
Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92101
619/645-3133

Committees

Local Government, Chair
Budget and Fiscal Review
Energy, Utilities
and Communications

Natural Resources & Water
Transportation & Housing
Joint Committee on
Homeland Security and
Emergency Services, Chair

Legislative Update

Leading Efforts to Protect California's Property Owners

After the Supreme Court's ruling on eminent domain which allows government to seize private homes for commercial development, I hosted a series of hearings to find out from Californians about how this issue is affecting their communities. I heard from homeowners who feel they may lose their homes, and I also heard from community groups that support redevelopment projects to clean up neighborhoods in crisis.

This is not a simple issue, but one thing is clear: the state needs to do more to tighten the laws and regulations that protect homeowners. That's why I've introduced two measures, SB 1206 and SB 53, which do just that.

Senate Bill 1206 reforms the state policies and procedures for redevelopment projects. Specifically, this measure:

- Tightens the definition and limits the use of "blight," a designation that opens the door for redevelopment projects
- Makes it easier for residents to challenge unpopular redevelopment decisions
- Increases state oversight of the redevelopment process

The second measure, SB 53, limits redevelopment agencies' use of eminent domain by requiring redevelopment plans to contain a description of the agency's program to acquire real property by eminent domain, including prohibitions, if any, on the use of eminent domain, and a time limit for the commencement of eminent domain proceedings.

Senator Kehoe leads an eminent domain hearing in San Diego

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Senator Kehoe hears from San Diego homeowners and developers at a hearing on eminent domain in City Heights in late 2005. For more information on Kehoe's redevelopment legislation, go to www.leginfo.ca.gov, click on **Bill Information** and search for SB 1206 and SB 53.

Removing Firearms in Domestic Violence Cases

Need for legislation underscored after San Diego boy slain by armed father

The Senate has taken an important step towards increasing safety in certain potentially dangerous domestic situations by passing my legislation to provide additional protections for people seeking protective orders against individuals who possess firearms.

Because the issuance of a protective order can be followed by incidences of increased violence, in certain circumstances it is important to remove the guns as quickly as possible after the protective order has been served.

The need for this legislation was brought forward in response to the tragic death of Evan Nash, a San Diego high school student who was gunned down by his own father after his father had been served with a protective order. Less than 24 hours after being served with the protective order, Evan's father ambushed him and shot Evan in cold blood, before later turning the gun on himself after an 8-hour standoff with police. Last year, Evan's mother, Lucy Nash, traveled from San Diego to Sacramento to testify in support of this measure.

Specifically, SB 585:

- Adds additional provisions to the Family Code to allow law enforcement to consider seeking the immediate surrender of a firearm from a person served with a protective order.
- Reduces from 72 hours to 48 hours the time frame by which a person served with a protective order must show proof to a court that they either sold or surrendered their firearms.
- Requires that application forms for protective orders include a question and space regarding what types of firearms are in the possession of the respondent.

To read the text of this measure, go to www.leginfo.ca.gov, click on **Bill Information** and search for SB 585.

Governor Passes Emergency Prescription Legislation

The Legislature and Governor have approved legislation to ensure that the state will continue to be the payer of last resort for Medicare Part D until May 16 in order to make sure Medi-Cal and

Medicare eligible Californians have access to necessary drugs.

Pharmacists have been made aware of this prescription drug coverage extension. If

you need more information or assistance with this, call my office 619-645-3133.



Senator Kehoe talks about domestic violence issues at a National Women's Political Caucus event.



Senator Kehoe and San Diego District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis discuss California's domestic violence laws.

Public Works Bonds Progress

In January, Governor Schwarzenegger proposed a \$68 billion package of general obligation bonds as part of his \$222 billion plan to address transportation, education, water, flood control, public safety and court projects.

Legislative policy committees have begun their evaluation of the governor's bond bills. Senate President pro Tem Don Perata has introduced his own infrastructure measure, The Safe Facilities, Improved Mobility, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2006 (SB 1024), which is a plan to invest in California's roads, highways, ports and flood control.

Senator Perata stressed that local governments and state agencies need to work together in order for infrastructure projects to be successful, saying, "State and local partnerships are vital to actually getting transportation projects done. Local communities know best what their transportation needs and problems are, and that's where the spark should come from."

Over the next months we will be taking a close look at how transportation projects in California are prioritized, and how they should work with local governments to effectively use the bond proceeds to serve the public.

To read the text of this measure, go to www.leginfo.ca.gov, click on **Bill Information** and search for SB 1024. To read more about the Governor's infrastructure plan, go to www.ca.gov and click on the Governor's homepage link.

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Need help understanding changes to your Social Security benefits?

Many aged, blind and disabled SSI/SSP recipients are concerned about the freeze on their benefits which took effect in January.

They received a notice from the Social Security Administration informing them that while the federal government paid a cost-of-living increase on their SSI benefit, their total benefit will not increase

because the State is reducing the SSP share of their grant due to last year's budget action.

The State's Budget that was passed *last year* (for the 2005-06 fiscal year) does not "pass-through" the federal COLA on the SSI benefit for the first three months of 2006 – January, February and March. That is, on January 1 the \$24 SSI

increase was offset by a \$24 reduction in the SSP.

SSI/SSP recipients will begin to receive the federal SSI COLA on April 1, 2006.

If you are affected by this and have more questions our would like additional information, please call my office at (619) 645-3133.

Contact Information

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Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92101
619/645-3133

Website

www.senate.ca.gov/Kehoe

Committee Assignments

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and Communications
- Natural Resources & Water
- Transportation & Housing
- Joint Committee on
Homeland Security
and Emergency
Services, Chair

Don't throw that cell phone in the trash!

In order to reduce the lead, mercury, copper and other metals that leach out when electronic devices are crushed in landfills -- polluting groundwater, streams and wildlife, new state hazardous waste rules now ban California residents from throwing most consumer electronics, batteries or mercury-containing products in the garbage.

This "e-waste" includes digital cameras, cell phones, computers, printers, VCRs, microwave ovens, fluorescent lighting, glass thermometers and old thermostats.

Residents with any of these types of waste will be required to dispose of them at a household hazardous waste collection center where they can be recycled. To find an e-waste recycling center near you, go to: <http://www.ecycle.org/> and click on "Find an e-waste recycling location."

Brochures and California Constitution books available!

Various brochures as well as booklets containing the California Constitution are now available from my office. Brochure topics include:

- Medi-Cal Senior Fact Sheet
- Veterans Resource Guide
- Identity Theft
- Prescription Drug Discount Program for Medicare Recipients
- A Citizen's Guide to Lobbying

If you would like a free copy, please contact my office at (619) 645-3133 or Senator.Kehoe@sen.ca.gov.

Democratic Caucus Message

Back to Basics: The Senate Plan for California

In the post-election / pre-election window of early 2006, the legislature and the governor have the opportunity to work together to address real challenges that affect the lives of Californians. The Senate is committed to leading the effort to return the focus back to the basics that matter most: an education system that allows California students to learn and to compete in the global economy, a transportation system that allows people and goods to move safely and quickly, a public health system prepared to effectively respond to disease or disaster, and a reliable energy system and effective alternatives to fuels whose prices are as volatile as their formulas.

A key factor in getting back to basics is to ensure there is a realistic assessment of problems as well as different paths outlined that can be taken to solve them. Dictating policy solutions in an information vacuum or without agreement as to the fundamentals of a problem can result in rushed and flawed proposals, as witnessed in the initiatives California voters just rejected. Another major element of getting back to basics is to perform the necessary oversight to ensure that the people of California are getting the return they deserve from past policies and expenditures.

By getting back to basics, we can take California forward.

To access the Senate Caucus' website, go to: <http://democrats.sen.ca.gov>